

Abstract

Access of telemarketers or other call originators to destination user terminals of a communication system is controlled by storing for a given one of the user terminals a set of user-specified access cost information to be applied to one or more incoming calls directed to the given user terminal. A service provider or associated network processing element of the system utilizes the user-specified access cost information to determine an amount to charge an originator of a given incoming call directed to the user terminal. The charge for the incoming call may thus include a usual toll charge, if any, as well as an additional access cost determined based from the user-specified access cost information for the destination user terminal. The access cost may be presented to the originator of the given incoming call, and the incoming call may be routed to the user terminal only if the presented access cost is approved by the originator of the given incoming call. The access cost is charged to the originator and may be credited at least in part to an account of a called party associated with the user terminal. Advantageously, the invention reduces unwanted calls, while also providing information that allows telemarketers and other call originators to better target their calls.